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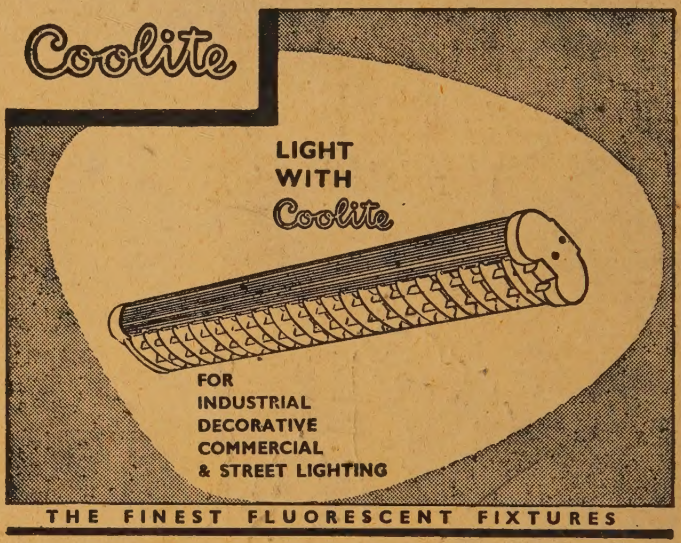

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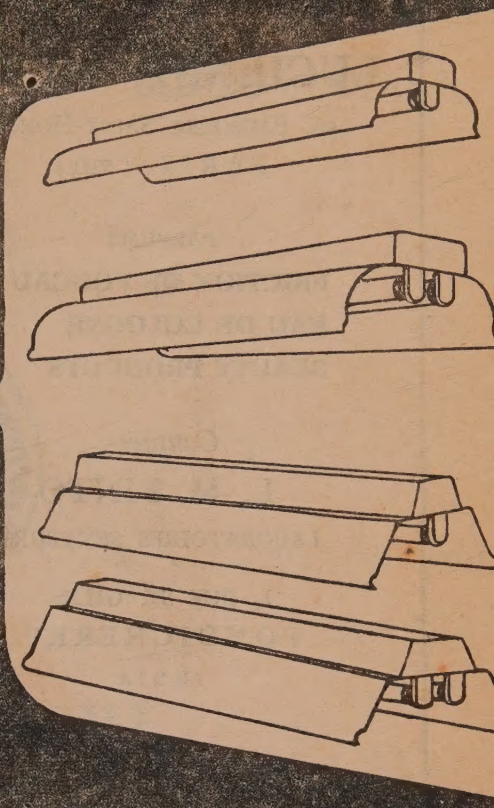

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COMPLIMENTARY

The Advent

There is one Truth but a million ways of distorting it in the attempt to express it.

The ADVENT

AUGUST, 1960

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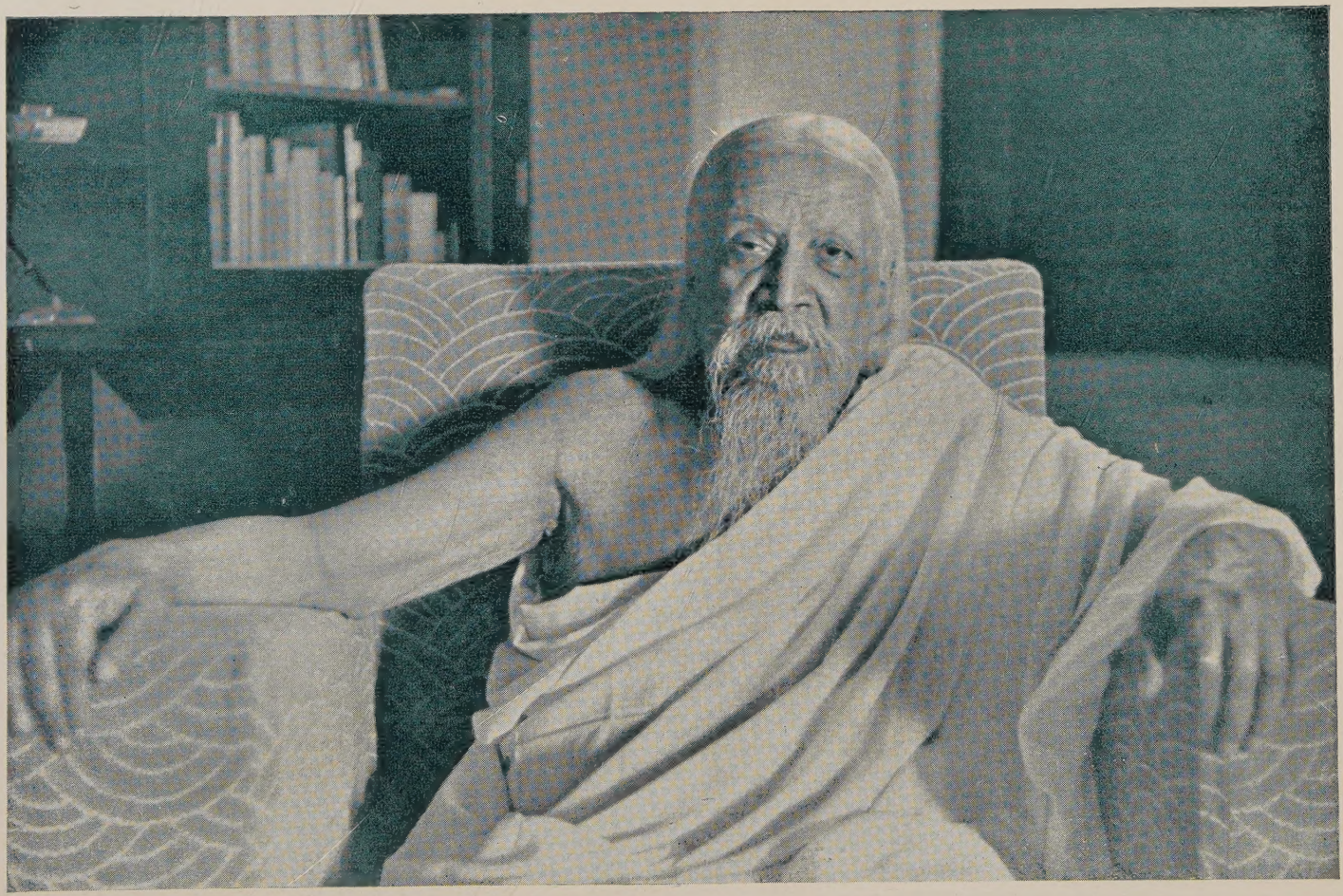
We climb ill if we forget our base.

SRI AUROBINDO



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THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - *Sri Aurobindo.*

EDITORIALS*

MOTHER'S COMMENTARY

ON

SRI AUROBINDO'S *Thoughts and Aphorisms*

XII

"They proved to me by convincing reasons that God does not exist, and I believed them. Afterwards I saw God, for He came and embraced me. And now which am I to believe, the reasonings of others or my own experience ?"

IT is not a question put by Sri Aurobindo, it is an ironical thrust. It is meant to bring out clearly the stupidity of the reasonings of the mind which imagines that it is capable of talking about things it does not know. It is nothing else than that.

* Based on the Mother's Talks

You can prove anything by the mind. If you know how to use it and possess the science of reasoning and deduction, you can prove every thing. Apart from that, it is an exercise given in the higher schools to make the mind flexible. A thesis is proved to you, and immediately after you have to prove the antithesis with equal conviction, and it is in the hope that if you rise a little higher you will find the synthesis.

Therefore, since it is admitted that everything can be proved, it means that reasonings lead nowhere; for if you can prove a thing and immediately after can prove the contrary, it is a proof that your proofs are of no value.

There is experience. For a simple heart, a simple and straight nature, a nature that knows that its experience is sincere, it is not a falsification of desire or mental ambition but a spontaneous movement coming from the soul, the experience is absolutely convincing. It loses its power of conviction when it gets mixed up with such things or the desire to have an experience or the ambition to believe oneself somebody very superior. If you have that in you, beware, because desire and ambition falsify experience. The mind is a maker of forms and if you have a very strong desire that something very important or interesting should happen to you, you can make it happen, at least apparently to those who see things superficially. But apart from such cases, if you are straight, sincere, spontaneous, and above all if the experiences happen to you spontaneously, without any effort on your part to have them, as the expression of your aspiration from the depths, then such experiences carry with them the seal of an absolute authenticity; the whole world may tell you that they are stupidities or illusions, but nothing will bring any change in your personal conviction. But naturally, for that, you must not deceive yourself, on your side, you must be sincere and straight with a complete inner rectitude.

Someone asked me, "How is it that God happens to manifest himself to an unbeliever?". This is rather comical, for if

it pleases God to manifest himself to an unbeliever, I do not see what can prevent him from doing so !

On the contrary, He has a sense of humour. Sri Aurobindo has repeated many a time that the Supreme has a sense of humour and it is we who wish to make of him a grave and always serious personage, and he may find it very amusing to come and embrace an unbeliever. He who might have said on the previous day, "God does not exist, I do not believe in him, it is stupidity and ignorance"...him He takes into his arms, hugs him to his breast and laughs in his very face.

Everything is possible, even things that appear absurd to our small limited intelligence.

In fact, only when we will have read these aphorisms till the last that we shall have a chance of understanding them, because in each he puts us in a position that is quite different from the truth that is to be discovered. The angles are innumerable, the points of view innumerable. And one can say the most contradictory things without belying oneself, without contradicting oneself; everything depends on the way you look at things. And even when we have seen everything, from all points of view accessible to us all around the central truth, we would have still just a little glimpse. The Truth will escape from us on all sides at the same time. But what is remarkable is that if we have the experience of one single contact with the Divine, a true experience, spontaneous and sincere, then at that moment, in that experience we shall know all and even more. That is why it is so important to live the little that one knows with all sincerity so that one may be able to have the experience and to know by experience, know not by the mind but because you live the things, because they become part of your being and consciousness.

To put in practice the little that one knows is the best way of knowing more, it is the most powerful means of advancing on the path. Just a little practice but very sincere. For example, when you know something is not to be done, not to do the thing.

When you have seen in your being a weakness, an infirmity, not to allow it to reproduce itself. When you have the vision of what is to be done, even though for a moment, in an ardent aspiration, not to, never to forget to become it.

There are persons who always lament on their infirmities. That does not take far. If you have seen them truly once, and truly, sincerely you have understood, you have seen that it should not be like that, then be done with lamentations; it is now the daily effort, it is now the building of the will, it is now the vigilance of every moment; you should never allow a fault once recognised to renew itself. To err through ignorance, through inconscience is of course a very regrettable thing, but it is repairable. Whereas to continue to do the mistake even when you know that it should not be done is a cowardice and we should not lend ourselves to it.

To say, "Oh, human nature is like that. Oh, we are in the inconscience. Oh, we are in the ignorance", is merely lazines and weakness. And behind the laziness and ignorance there is a big bad will.

I say this because there are many who have made this remark to me, many. And always it is a way of giving excuses to oneself. To say, "we do what we can" is not saying the truth. For if you are sincere, once you have seen the thing, it is final. So long as you have not seen, there is nothing to say, but the moment you have seen, it is the moment when you receive the Grace; and from the moment you have received the Grace, you have no right to forget it.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

SRI AUROBINDO LITERATURE (VII)

Letters (*contd.*)

Foundations of Sadhana

ONE can begin the sadhana in any part of his being that is more awake than the others and seeks a higher direction. In some it is the heart that is astir and longs for the Divine Beloved; for them the most natural way is the Way of Love and Devotion. In some it is the mind that is ardent and searches for a Truth that is more satisfying than any it has known thitherto; for them is the Way of Meditation and Knowledge. In others it is the will, the life-dynamism that is dissatisfied with the normal round of activity and seeks to yoke itself to a higher Purpose and serve the Lord of All; for them is the Way of Works.

But whichever the Way one takes to in order to transcend the ordinary nature of humanity and grow into the heights and expanses of supernature, it is essential that the foundations of the sadhana are laid firm. Unless one prepares the base of the Adhar strong enough to bear the incessant pressure of the Yoga Force at work for change, for growth, for reconstitution of the very texture of the being as in our Yoga, there is ever a danger of failure or breakdown on the way. The ordinary mind and the vital nature of man are apt to lose their balance and go off at a tangent once they are released—in the course of yoga—from the normal limitations to which they are subject; they may get overwhelmed with the descents of joy, power and light that greet the yogin on the path. The physical body itself, unless it is freed of its obscurity and rendered supple. may not respond pliantly to the demands of the Yoga-Shakti. To avert these dangers

it is indispensable that the sadhaka first lays a strong foundation for the structure to come.

The very first step in laying the proper foundation, says Sri Aurobindo, is to acquire a Quiet in the being. Quiet means a state of mind in which there is no restlessness, no movement of anxiety or similar emotion which keeps a constant tenseness in the being and to that extent interferes with the opening of the being to the Higher Consciousness, obstructs the smooth and conscious reception of the incoming vibrations of the Higher Force or the outflowings of the soul within.

This quietude of the mind *acañcalatā*, is to be acquired, built up with vigilance and will. It can be said to be established when there is no habitual restlessness, no incessant movement keeping the mind in a whirl. Though a negative condition it is the first step leading to the next, the Calm, *sthiratā*. Calm is a more positive state in which there is a kind of tranquillity which is not disturbed by movement on the surface. Disturbances may come and pass but they move on the surface; the mind is serene. Sri Aurobindo describes two kinds of Calm : the negative calm where there is no contrary movement; the positive calm which solidly resists all movements that seek to disturb.

A still more positive condition is when there is entry of Peace, *śānti*, in the being. It carries with it a sense of solidity, harmony and deliverance with a quiet Ananda permeating its vibrations. In such a state there can be no real disturbance which can affect the secure poise of the being.

The being is to be gradually taught to grow into these conditions of Quiet, Calm and Peace. Unless it frees itself from its habitual turmoil and naturalises these into its system, there can be no secure holding of the riches of the Spirit which one calls down into oneself by aspiration and will and the Grace sanctions.

The most effective way to begin is mentally to conceive a Silence which is at the back of all movement. After all, thoughts are not the texture of the mind. Thoughts pass, other thoughts come and they too flit across some silent and immobile background

of the mind. A repeated suspension of the thought-movement, and an increasing awareness of the Silence behind, effects the needed opening and the Silence begins to take hold of the mind. It is in this condition that Calm and Peace settle themselves. Here too, there are two kinds of silence. One, in which there is absolutely no movement in the inner consciousness; there is no reaction at all to activity in the external being; this is the passive silence. The other is the active silence in which from out of the Silence there goes out a powerful force of action without leaving a ripple within.

For true Peace to settle in the being there must be this stillness, the silence which prepares a state of utmost receptivity; it keeps the vessel empty. But this peace is not static. It is active and spreads to the other parts of the being as they begin to accept it, though initially it may enter through the mind. It has a purifying action wherever it goes and thus builds up a developing condition of purity which is an indispensable factor for progress in sadhana.

Purity is an equally essential part of the foundation. Naturally, by purity is not meant physical cleanliness. Nor is it only a moral rectitude of the kind spoken of in the Dharma Sastras. Purity in Sri Aurobindo's sense, means an exclusive opening to the Divine alone; it implies the total rejection of all influences alien to the Divine. A sole fidelity to the Divine is what purity means in our sadhana. And Peace helps in the growth of this purity in as much as disturbing and foreign movements are automatically rejected from a state of Peace. Peace admits only those which are akin to its nature, nourish it and thrive in it. Further, inner Peace lessens the necessity of outer contacts and minimises the intrusion of external influences.

Next comes Equality, *samatā*. The normal human mind and vital nature are always apt to identify themselves with men and events, forces and circumstances, as they impinge upon the persons, and get lost in the rush of their emotions and passions. For a sadhaka it is necessary that he should detach himself from

the current of happenings; he has to gradually learn to stand back from the rush of Prakriti and observe things aloof from them. That way one acquires a dispassion, a growing equanimity which faces men and things in the world without getting helplessly involved in them. All contacts are received in an equable and unmoved status by the being and the utmost is made of each circumstance for an ordered and rapid growth of the evolving consciousness.

It is of course difficult to attain to this state of calm equality within a short time. A fund of patience, a steady will persistent in the face of all opposition and difficulty, to acquire and make of it (inner equanimity) a natural poise of the being is demanded of the sadhaka.

And lastly there must be a spiritual atmoshpere in which the sadhana can thrive. If one can get it, for instance, in the environs of the Guru, nothing could be better. If not, one must create the spiritual air around oneself and live in it. And that is possible because the atmosphere one carries is always a reflection of the state of one's inner consciousness.

M.P. PANDIT

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER (VII)

EDUCATION

Rudolf Steiner Schools or Waldorf Schools

RUDOLF Steiner, an Austrian philosopher and artist of considerable insight, was a lover of Indian thought and a great admirer of Indian culture. He was one of those few Westerners who could pierce through the cryptic symbols of the Vedas and glimpse something of the matchless sublimity of their mystical revelations. He says : "What we read in the Vedas, those archives of Hindu wisdom, gives us only a faint idea of the sublime doctrines of the ancient teachers, and even so, these are not in their original form. Only the gaze of the clairvoyant, directed upon the mysteries of the past, may reveal the unuttered wisdom which lies hidden behind these writings." It will not, then, be unreasonable to suppose that he was greatly influenced by Indian thought, and that something of it must have gone into the conception of his theory of education.

According to the Year Book of Education, 1957, there are now about 50 Waldorf or Rudolf Steiner schools in Europe and America, educating over fifteen thousand children.

What is the philosophy behind this system of education ? What is Steiner's contribution to the modern science of teaching ?

Steiner tried to bring about a marriage between the arts and the sciences. He advocated at once the introduction of the scientific spirit—its inextinguishable curiosity to inquire and know, its firm grip on the material and objective, and its minute observation and precise expression—into the study and practice of the arts and the humanities; and the introduction of the spirit of the arts and the humanities, their imaginative idealism, their synthetic

vision, their tendency to proceed from the whole to the parts[1] —and not, like science, from the parts to the whole—into the study and practice of science. He thus hoped to bridge the gulf not only between science and the humanities, but between East and West.

Steiner believed that there are three rhythmic periods of development in childhood. In the first period, that is to say, the first six or seven years, the child's life is centred in the activity of its limbs. It is the period of the growth and working of the will—not a conscious, but an unconscious will—through the movements of the limbs. "The small child literally kicks himself into consciousness". The child grows by freely exercising its limbs, and unconsciously developing its will. It lives in its physical activities, and has a keen joy of them, not for the results they produce, but simply in their very process, in the automatic willing and doing involved in them. Living is a sort of waking dream. "Heaven lies about us in our infancy."[2] The child has a nostalgic flair for the picturesque, and it would be a cruel act of vandalism to destroy its dream images and phantasies by the frosty touch of the so-called facts of life. Steiner stressed the importance of fantasy and imagination in the first period of the child, and advised the arrangement of lessons in terms of pictures and images. He deprecated any premature development of the intellectual powers of the child in the first period.

The second period comprises the next seven years, years of adolescence, in which the development of the mental life begins, characterised by a sense of authority. The child now loves to be moved by wonder and pity, fear and courage, love and hatred, which stimulate its feelings. This is the period intervening between that of the will and automatic physical activities, and that which, later on, will mark the growth of thought and

[1] The psychologist, Stout, holds that that the human mind (unless perverted) has a natural tendency to perceiving complete wholes before proceeding to a consideration of isolated parts or elements.

[2] Wordsworth.

the mental faculties. According to Steiner, the child thinks with its heart at this period, and not with its head. It is a kind of heart-thinking, which is basically different from head-thinking, the latter being something abstract, and having less hold and effect on life and character. In this period lessons should be so selected as to promote the development and enrichment of the feelings of the child. The child must be taught to look with wonder and reverence on the world surrounding it—the beauties and marvels of Nature, the nobility of the moral order, the grandeur and greatness of human life and its creative endeavours.

The third is the period of idealism, in which intellectual thinking develops along with a tendency to hero-worship. There grows a natural attraction to whatever is extraordinary or exceptional, whether it be good or evil. The teachers' life and character, the environment, the nature of the books read, the nature of the company kept—these are some of the most important elements in the education of the youth during this period of idealism. The final dye is cast at this time of the youth's life.

Steiner believed that man has sprung from God, and is secretly guided by Him; and that "in the conception and birth of a child an entity which existed previously in spiritual worlds unites with the physical body mediated by the parents." He regarded childhood as a period of continuous birth in that the descending spirit only slowly takes possession of the functions of the physical body. The aim of the Waldorf school is to help the process of this incarnation. Children should not be rushed into a knowledge of the physical and mechanical world. Their dreams and fantasies have a greater creative value in life than the shoddy practical lessons with which their minds are usually sought to be stuffed.

I suppose I have given a fairly comprehensive outline of the main trends and theories of modern education. I have omitted to mention a few of them, such as, the system of Herbart, the Decroly method or the Dalton Plan etc. as they do not seem to me to represent any fresh, creative outlook on education, or any new contribution to it.

I have purposely refrained so far from saying anything in regard to the recent contribution of American thought to the art of teaching, particularly the methods advocated by Dewey. I shall do that now, and attempt a very brief comparative study of the systems of English and American education.

Democracy, citizenship, pragmatism and scientific efficiency are the watchwords of the American system of education. To these four has been added, over the last thirty or forty years, a growing craze for technology. Benjamin Franklin's Practicalism, Jefferson's Republicanism, Horace Mann's Moralism, Stanley Hall's Individualism, and John Dewey's Reformism have all gone into the formulation of the American system of education. But the influence which is most pervasive and effective today is that of John Dewey.

Dewey propounded the theory that there is a vital relation between philosophy, education and culture. The nature of the philosophy of an age or country determines the nature of its education, and education is the mainspring of civilisation. Dewey was quite right so far as this theory is concerned. In the last analysis, it is, indeed, philosophy that sets the pattern of a culture, and carves the distinctive features of a civilisation.[1] But where Dewey went hopelessly wrong was the definition he gave of philosophy. He made philosophy a product of the age in which it is born, a temporary and temporising formulation of the fundamental demands of a civilisation, "a reflection and an interpretation of its specific traits and tendencies." By a curious inversion of thought, he assigned to civilisation a role which proved fatal to philosophy and disastrous to civilisation itself. In his book, "The School and the Social Progress", Dewey argues that, because American civilisation is rushing towards industrialism and the type of homeless and leisureless life it leads to, the philosophy of education, as a loyal child of the civilisation, must adjust itself to suit the changed and changing conditions, and serve the civilisa-

[1] Thought precedes and prepares the patterns of life.

tion as best it can. Philosophy, which is a science of the ultimates, an inquiry into the eternal values of existence, and a pathfinder to Truth and Reality, was thus robbed of its timeless essence, and made to subserve the chamelion phases of the aimless drift of civilisation. Dewey failed to foresee that if there be at all an aim in the present race towards industrialism, it cannot but be a short-lived one; for the bitter fruits of modern industrialism will before long compel humanity to turn to another type of civilisation, which will deliver it from its slavery to the machine, and its infatuated obsession with material things and comforts, and open men's eyes to the eternal Source and Sustenance of universal life. Not that science will be scrapped and its importance belittled, but man will become master of science, and his consciousness infinitely higher and wider than the petty field in which science works. Deceived by appearances and misled by Darwinian evolutionism, Dewey failed to see that there was no philosophy, worth the name, behind America's mad rush towards industrialism[1] and technology; and what he accepted as civilisation was only a passing cult of money and machine, practised with the irrepressible vigour and virility of a young nation.

In his "Democracy and Education", Dewey advocated and underlined an extension of Mann's theory of the common school into "a more generalised theory of the democratic school", which acted as a counterblast to Hall's theory of "individualism", and fitted pretty well into the motley character of American society. The ghost of Karl Marx must have played a trick upon Dewey. The individuality of the student, upon which Pestalozzi and Froebel had insisted with so much force, was sacrificed to the social eviathan. An unquestioning conformism thus came to be the guiding principle of American education; and social welfare, without the originating and pioneering genius of the individual, became the delusive ideal the nation was taught to follow. The child was

[1] "The groups and the nations in which industrial civilisation has attained its highest development are precisely those which are becoming weaker, and whose return to barbarism is the most rapid. But they do not realise it."—Alexis Carrel.

made to adjust itself with a good grace to the heterogeneous and often uncongenial community life. The secret of linking the individual to the society through a full and free development of the former was lost sight of in the frenzied eagerness for the general advancement of the latter. Crowd psychology, the cult of the average and the herd man got the better of whatever strain of individualism Stanley Hall had injected into the American mind. Dewey failed to harmonise the past and the present for the construction of the future. The shoddy average was enthroned as the optimum, the piebald extolled as the ideal. Dewey's philosophy fell a victim to his blinkered "reformism".

American and English Systems of Education

The fundamental outlook of the American mind is pragmatic, and not idealistic. It does not prize knowledge so much for its own sake as for the practical results it is expected to produce. Beauty is not unwelcome, provided that it can immediately convert itself into utility. Reason is not valued, reflection is not encouraged except in so far as they conduce to the physical well-being of man, to the production of amenities and comforts, to the satisfaction of the desires and appetites of life. Life—practical, hedonistic, active, tirelessly manufacturing and amassing material things— is regarded as an ideal life. It is hard work, active service, and a zealous pursuit of material ends that command admiration in American society; and a leisurely cultivation of the mental and cultural capacities and refinements are looked down upon as useless frippery and waste of time.

This outlook has gone into the shaping of the theory and practice of American education, which is essentially an education for the average man, the commonalty. "America seeks a well-educated proletariat, and is getting it", remarks Percival R. Cole. Society is the load-star of American education. Another factor which stultifies the enormous educational projects of America is the violent swing of the American mind towards vocationalism

and specialisation, which has resulted in an increasing loss of what has been called "a general body of knowledge as a base of reference for intelligent exchange of ideas and common action." As Sydney J. French says : "We have lost the core of unity of the early liberal arts, and due to a variety of impingements have found ourselves spread into unlike segments whose boundaries do not even come together and among which communication becomes impossible." The latest feverish impetus given to certain aspects of scientific research in connection with the development of nuclear armaments and space exploration is having a disastrous effect upon what little liberal education has yet survived the onslaught of scientific technology.

In contradistinction to the aim of American education, which is the realisation of the democratic and utilitarian ideal, the English Public School, which can be called the prism of the traditional principles of English education, stresses individual development and character. In this tradition there is a love of knowledge for its own sake, and a preference for leisure for the cultivation of the higher perceptions and sensibilities of the mind, and an orientation to the culture and refinement of the aristocracy of the human spirit. There is always a clear line drawn between culture and utility, between the heights of thought and the low lands of pragmatic pursuits. The British theory of liberal education puts a premium on the classics, on the development and enrichment of the life of the intellect, and the graces and delights of the arts. It provides ample scope for evoking and fostering the qualities of leadership in the students, and is judiciously selective, and not indiscriminately egalitarian, in its encouragement of talent. It is not led by a false sense of democracy to herd genius and mediocrity together. Special privileges and opportunities it offers to exceptional students; for it knows that it is the exceptional, the extraordinary, the non-conformist rebels with a spark of the Promethean fire in them that are the pioneers of society. They are the architects of the future. There is a strong vein of healthy conservatism in the system of English education, which keeps it linked to the past,

and saves it from the uncertain fate of a mushroom education adrift upon the freshets of changing fashions. The English Public School is independent of all extraneous control, whether of society or of the State, and thanks to this independence, it has been able to preserve something of the traditional principles and vitality of a continuous culture. Another salient feature of the English Public School is the School Chapel where once a day "the whole community gathers together for the worship of God." This also is a living, though much outworn, link between the deeper aims and values of life and its surface demands and necessities. The empirical man has not yet been completely severed from his anchorage on his cultural inheritance.

I have purposely given a sharp outline of the cardinal traits and distinctive features of the English and American systems of education, so that the two nations' individual approaches to the matter may be clearly grasped by the reader. But these traits and features are no longer found in their unmixed purity today. There has been a lot of intermixture, an inevitable overlapping, a dilution and even a distortion of them, as a result of the annihilation of space by modern science, the development of the idea of human unity, and the growing dominance of American influence on the general life and civilisation of the world.

It is being more and more realised in America that it will spell the suicide of education, if it produces nothing better than men who know "more and more about less and less". Beardsley Rumi notices a new trend, which is really very welcome : "There is an explicit reawakening to the importance of a liberalising education at the higher level....The vocational training dictated as preparation for the professions is beginning to be de-emphasised." Universities like Princeton, Harvard and Yale are adopting the tutorial system of Oxford. The idea of a multi-purpose university is slowly filtering into the American mind, and may, in the near future, come to mitigate the evil effects of an inflated technology and overspecialisation. But there is no spiritual ideal yet discernible on the educational horizon of America; and until

that comes, the field of education is bound to remain a welter of superficial and temporising ideologies.

In England, on the other hand, the conservative preference for the liberal education is giving way under the American influence. The menace of a plethoric technology has already cast a sinister shadow upon English education, and tends to exert a disruptive and coarsening effect upon it, as well as upon the general cultural life of the people. The quarrel between science and the humanities seems to be ending in a thundering victory for the former. The wide, tolerant, humane and harmonious outlook of the liberal education, in which past and present were knit together, is being supplanted by the narrow, flurried, philistine attitude of technological education—a fungus growth, having no roots in the past, nor capable of surviving in the future in its present monstrous form. Industrialism and over-specialisation are threatening to swamp the educational field, and turning human life, as they have already turned it in America, into a breathless race, in which there is neither repose nor reflection, neither inner peace and silence nor time for thinking of the deeper, essential problems of existence. A total inner destitution, a collapse of the inner man stares the English nation in the face today.

But, as I have said so often, all is not yet lost; all is not doomed to be lost. For, far behind the sombre foreground, new forces are being born, new creative ideas are flashing into progressive minds, and the vision of a golden dawn of spiritual culture is haunting the pioneer spirit of man.

(To be continued)

RISHABHCHAND

"LILA"*

I

THIS complex world with its bewildering varieties of organisation of consciousness is regarded by man in different ways according to the stages of his evolution. When he lives in the vital ego with the physical mind as its slave and instrument, he looks upon the universe as a field for the satisfaction of his inordinate desires and therefore good in his moods of gratification and bad, indeed a hell, in his moods of frustration. Life is felt as a battle in which the individual must use all his capacities to get, nay wrench from the very hostile and unwilling nature as much as he can, and fellow human beings are so many actual or potential competitors, to be shunted off or knocked out of one's path of fulfilment and success. But the man of Sattvic intelligence and reason begins to realise that the universe exists not only or merely for him but for all such beings and therefore cooperation and the art of living and letting others live are accepted as the rule of life which is now not a mere area of expression of desires but a training ground for the various faculties in him—intellection, imagination, aesthetic sense, will and moral sense. The emphasis has shifted from the exclusive individual ego to the collective human ego and from the senses to the higher faculties in man. The centre of gravity is still in the surface mental ego. A deeper poise becomes possible when the consciousness of the man is turned within and gets its anchorage in the inner Purusha, the silent spectator of the human drama of outer Prakriti. The world is then felt as a complex movement of One Force of Nature with multiple centres and forms of manifestation witnessed impartially

* Sri Aurobindo's sonnet included in *Last Poems*

and tolerated by several Purushas. But this is only a transition to a greater experience when one merges in the Atman behind and beyond all the so-called Purushas and Prakriti. This is an Impersonal Presence in all, through all and above all, a featureless, quality-less Absolute. Or going deeper still into this infinite consciousness, one arrives at and loses oneself in a Supreme Nihil, a fundamental Void, Shunya. To a consciousness stationed in either the Atman or the Nihil, the world is Maya. Atman reflected in *sāttviki māyā* is Ishwara or the Lord of the universe, which is only a reflection in tamasic maya of the same Atman. And the universe exists for the Jivas who are once again reflections of Atman in rajasic maya. *Māyāmayamidamakhilam jagat.* Liberation is the non-identification with the reflections and the perception of the ever-present Sat or Asat Atman, so that the mukta could say: *cidānandarūpaḥ śivoham śivoham.* This is the view of the spiritualised mind and a great peak in spiritual sadhana. But an ascent beyond into ranges of the overmental reveals that beyond the Atman is the Purushottama, who is indeed the Lord of the universe, one who is beyond the lower Maya of the three gunas. The universe is the manifestation in his infinite being of his endless qualities by a higher Divine Power, the Paraprakriti, for He is the *anantaguṇa Brahman* who is not bound by either personality or impersonality. All is the play, *rāśa-krīḍā*, of Paraprakriti and Purushottama, Radha and Krishna, Kameshwari and Kameshwara, a pure expression of the divine Ananda. Life in this world is for sharing in the joy of the Lila in Avidya or Ignorance and for preparing oneself by spiritual evolution in devotion to partake of the ecstasy of sustained identity, *sāyujya*, with the Lord in the realms of Vidya or Knowledge—Golaka or Vaikunta. A more complete experience is the Supramental vision which sees the universal manifestation as a sport whose aim is the affirmation of Sachchidananda in its apparent opposite. Sri Aurobindo's sonnet on Lila embodies this Supramental vison of life.

II

The Divine Lord is seated in the heart of every individual creature and all the functions of the different faculties in him in the different parts and planes of his consciousness are only the play of the Divine Shakti either in Ignorance or in Knowledge. Each Jiva has his own unique relationship with Him and He assumes the form and nature proper to that relationship and according to the quality of the aspiration of each. *Ye yathā mām prapadyante tamstataiva bhajāmyaham.* Thus there are a thousandfold Forms of that One Supreme Lord in the manifold Jivas and individual organisations of consciousness. Even in the same individual we have a thousandfold variations of working and manifestation of the Lord's Shakti in the different states of wakefulness, dream and sleep, in the subliminal, surface, subconscient, inconscient and superconscient parts of his being. The Purusha is *Sahasraśīrṣa.*

> In us is the thousandfold Spirit who is one,
> An eternal thinker calm and great and wise,
> A seer whose eye is an all-regarding sun,
> A poet of the cosmic mysteries.

He is the Spirit, the essential Sachchidananda in whose infinite consciousness all is and by whose vitalising breath all is formed, maintained and dissolved, motivated by an inmost delight of existence. In the luminous words of the Isha Upanishad : "It is He that has gone abroad—That which is bright, bodiless, without scar of imperfection, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil. The Seer, the Thinker, the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent has ordered objects perfectly according to their nature from years sempiternal." In Him is the Divine Supermind with its powers of conception, comprehension and creation, endless and limitless, and simultaneous in their operation. The first is the power of Thought 'which works from the

divided consciousness through the possibilities of things downward to the actual manifestation in form and upward to their reality in the self-existent Brahman'. The second is the power 'of direct vision and illumination seeing the reality, the principles and forms of things in their true relations'. The third is the power of embodying in an adequate and beautiful form the thought and vision. They sum up the process by which the Infinite becomes the Finite, the Divine shapes himself as the World, the One deploys as the Many, the Eternal assumes its multitudinous tenements and habitations in Time, the cosmic mysteries, with their ascending and descending movements in the ladder of existence from the Superconscient to the Inconscient through its intermediate rungs like the Supramental, the Overmental and its delegates and the triple world of the lower hemishpere of the mind, life and matter. This Divine Thinker is a contrast in every respect to the human mental thinker. He is calm, not restless; great, with a wide consciousness and range, not small and limited; wise, always perceiving the Truth, never ignorantly groping. And this seer has the power of total and integral vision looking with the steady, penetrating and all comprehending gaze of the sun. The sun sends its powerful rays on all the objects, envelopes them and contains them and in the process illuminates them, revealing their essence and their most minute details and corners and all this happens not successively but simultaneously. Such is the vision of this seer, a Knowledge by Identity of Satya —*sat ca tyat ca*, Truth of essence and Truth of manifestation. The sun however is not a mere image or a symbol but a spiritually concrete description of the experience of the Transcendent Creative Force in the highest altitudes of the spiritual consciousness. That is how the Vedic Rishi sees the Sun beyond the zones of darkness —*ādityavarṇam tamasaḥ parastāt*. And the Tantric Yogi of the Sri Vidya tradition hymns Rajarajeshwari as One with the lustre of a thousand rising suns—*Udyatbhānusahasrabha*—extending her rays and filling all the lower planes of consciousness with her emanations, *raśmimālā*.

This Seer and Thinker is moved by the intense Ananda of Contemplation of the complex harmony to create the grandiose poem of the universe with its architectonic proportions and structures. All the creations are variations on the same theme of the miraculous manifestation of the Infinite in the Finite. Each is a mystery, the outer form concealing the indwelling divinity from the eyes of the profane desire-soul, but standing self-revealed to the desireless and aspiring initiate. In every plane of the created world apparent contraries coexist and the aim seems to be the establishment of the higher in the lower which is often its exact logical opposite—Luminous Spirit and Inert Matter; Static Poise and Dynamic Involvement; Immortality and Mortality. The whole scheme baffles mental logic and is therefore a mystery. The very nature of the Divine is a mystery—to be one and yet thousandfold, to be simultaneously the Seer, the Thinker and the Poet—and his creation naturally partakes of this mysterious quality. Krishna is the Lilamaya and the world emanating from Him is Lila.

III

The Divine Poet has composed his magnificent poem with its varied and intricate craftsmanship and He now becomes its Rasika, the appreciating critic and explicates it with his characteristic tools and methods.

> A critic Witness pieces everything
> And binds the fragments in his brilliant sheaf;

Poetry is creative; criticism is constructive. Poetry is visioned in a mood of superconscious trance. Criticism attempts at a conscious entry into that state of grace and reconstructs the elements gathered in that mood of sympathetic identification, *sahṛdayatwa*, in a pattern intelligible to itself and rendering with as much glow and warmth of the creative fire as can be preserved or incorporated in the alien medium of prose. It is the art of intense concen-

tration on every line, word, syllable and the individual sounds and their mutual relationship and relationship to the whole form of the poem, to extract their multiple suggestiveness and revelation of the vision embodied in it. Everything has to be depieced with everything else and all must be put together into a mental pattern. Each reading of the poem reveals only an aspect of the creative work and therefore only a fragment of the whole and all such fragments have to be bound together to form an ordered structure. No single act of criticism or all the acts of all the critics of the past, present and future can exhaust the meaning of a great work of Art. And each structure or explication is the product of a laboured intellectual logic, a binding and not a fusion of the elements as they are in the creative work, forged by the alchemy of vision. But the Imagination of the Rasika goes far indeed in helping the intellect to reflect the glory and beauty of the poem and though each critical work is only a sheaf, a bundle of a limited number of stalks of corn and not the whole field or the stalks as they are in their natural setting and atmosphere in the field, the sheaf is brilliant, splendid as an outstanding achievement of translating the vision of poetry in a recalcitrant medium. This attempt at recapturing the exalted state of the poet has all the glitter and sparkle of the imaginative mind. But the final structure depieced and bound by the critic, even when it points to and helps in the understanding of the vision of the poet, forces the realisation of the vanity of it all. Where is the field with its virgin beauty and where is the sheaf of the critic with its skill and ingenuities ? The Grace of Poetry is lost and the only tribute it deserves is the ironical word 'Brilliant'. For the whole strength and weakness of the critic consists in his detached contemplation of the poem as a witnessing consciousness. The poet works by a knowledge by identity with what he writes and sees in a fine frenzy but the critic stands back from the work as a spectator. The Divine having created and being in the very process of creation, becomes also the Purusha behind the creation. He is the Sakshi, Anumanta and Bhokta of all. He is the Rasika of the universe enjoying the Rasa

and Ananda by Bhoga. Not taking part in the world drama but passively observing and explicating it. In each individual we have this Purusha in the subliminal part of his being, variously called according to his poise or seat, the *manomaya*, *prāṇamaya* or the *annamaya* purusha. Each purusha is like a critic and though he is face to face with the whole poem of the universal creation of Prakriti he gets only a fragmentary vision of it and translates the universal mystery in terms with which he can negotiate.

But the Divine is not only the silent witness seated in the interior, Kutastha Akshara, but all these becomings in time and space, Ksharah Sarvani Bhutani. He is in Prakriti, even this lower Prakriti of the three Gunas with its terrible iron law of determinism, conditioning in time and space, subjection to the dualities and insecurity and uncertainty of issue or result.

> A World-adventurer borne on Destiny's wings
> Gambles with death and triumph, joy and grief.

He is not content with the static poise but loves to enter into the dynamic and cyclic movement, very much like an eddy that the 'world' is—a *saṁsarā*, *jagat*. This action is a plunge into the realm of Ignorance rooted in the Subconscient and the Inconscient. It is certainly a great adventure for the Immortal to choose to live in the world of mortality, for the ever-free to accept the chains of circumstance, nay just to be carried on the wings of Fate and for the ever-blissful to be tossed between pleasure and pain. The whole is a gamble, a play for the high stakes of the establishment of Ananda in a region of transitory satisfactions, immortality in a world presided by Death involving the great risk of losing the inherent freedom, joy and eternal life and becoming a bondslave of Nature and Ananke. The alternatives are the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth, triumph, joy or to be swallowed by the black dragon of the Inconscient and be always subject to death and grief. But the high possibility and consummation are too great an attraction for Him to think of

weighing the dangerous consequences or desist from the attempt —a real spirit of the adventurer. This is the great mystery of creation, that the Transcendent Purushottama has become the Akshara and Kshara purushas.

IV

The Divine Lord is 'the master of all who work and rule and know' in the universe, the ordainer and controller and dispenser of Justice seasoned with Mercy, of Dharma and Kripa with a royal sovereignty, majesty and dignity, to whom all created beings are vassals and servants. But He is at the same time the servant of all those who give themselves completely to Him in a selfless love. In fact, He is willing to forsake his regality and transcendent status and enter into the realm of Ignorance in answer to the aspiring call of His devotees. He does not merely send succour and relief from His high station but descends into this world as the Avatar, puts upon Himself the robe of mortality and undergoes all the travail of human life and prepares the way for men to ascend into the realms of Knowledge. And this not once but at every step in the evolutionary ascent when a higher level of consciousness can be established on earth. And each time He descends He could be all the relations to his fellow human beings—the father, mother, son, friend, lover and indeed the servant and slave, all because of His unbounded love for His creatures. So He is

> A king of greatness and a slave of love,
> Host of the stars and guest in Nature's inn.

He in whose Heavenly Palace of the Realm of Ananda, Chaitanya and Satya Parama, the overmental Gods and Goddesses and their delegate angels of the Intermediate Zone (stars) are treated by Him to a feast of Light, Beauty, Love, Power and Bliss, has condescended to be here in the triple world of Nature as a Guest.

With every formation of an individual mind, vital and physical body, He indwells as the Psychic Being and the Antaryamin. But these sheaths are subject to death and decay and when they are dissolved, He leaves them only to enter into another group of formations of the mental, vital and physical. So each formation of Nature is a kind of inn for the Psychic, the Divine Spark and He goes from inn to inn of this natural construction. And indeed, He partakes freely of all the hospitality of the members in the inn, digests and assimilates the essence of the experiences in and with them and leaves the inn and its members only when they have left it and it is dissolved as well.

Also He is the indwelling Cosmic Soul, the Virat Purusha, of the whole Universal Nature with its totality of creatures which are changing every infinitesmal unit of time and whose similarity of successive patterns gives the illusion of fixity to the human mind, but which are really released and withdrawn by the Cosmic Shakti in the opening and closing of Her eyes—*Unmeṣa-nimiṣotpanna-vipanna-bhuvanāvaleḥ*. And so each organisation of Nature is only of temporary duration so that the Virat Purusha is having only a brief sojourn as in an inn, in Her habitation. He passes continually on in every successive Cosmos and so remains always a guest in Nature's inn.

This Psychic presence in the evolutionary manifestation is only a delegation from the Jivatman above presiding over the entire grouping of each individual organisation. The Divine is the Jivatman poised high in a spiritual and normally superconscient status and completely uninvolved in anything that happens below, just an impartial and equal-poised Spirit, *samatwasampanna*, and a looker-on of the cosmic happenings. He sees with an unperturbed tranquillity the psychic being evolving through its incarnations, the three levels of the Purusha in the subliminal mind, vital and physical which are only reflections of Himself in the inner consciousness and finally the fate of the individual desire-soul in Prakriti. He is seated in his throne of high eminence like the King in the chess board surveying all his fighting ranks grappling with

the forces of the enemy of the Inconscient. In this game of divine participation and arrangement aiming at the victory of the Divine in the human, the Immortal in the mortal, the Superconscient in the Inconscient, the desire-soul is like the pawn moved hither and thither with nonchalance by every other piece or force because of its inherent weakness and subjection to and even surveillance by Prakriti. Universal Nature works upon the desire-soul by sending waves of passions like lust, anger, jealousy, inertia and restlessness and despair into it to which it responds with a persistent habit and therefore is tossed in the turbulent waters of the Prakriti of the three gunas. And even this desire-soul, the pawn of passion is, only the becoming of the Divine. In the divine game of Spiritual Evolution and emergence of the Divine Person out of the involved state of Inconscience, the desire-soul is a first obscure formation of individuality though bound to the whims and fancies of the Prakriti. The Divine has chosen to assume this becoming in Ignorance as part of His Lila.

A high spectator Spirit throned above,
A pawn of passion in the game divine.

V

These are the cosmic mysteries created by the Divine Poet—to be the Transcendent Supermind in the Upper Hemisphere and to extend in the Universe as its Self and Spirit and at the same time indwell in the individual as the Antaryamin, to be Achyuta, Ananta and Govinda, *Rajarājeśwarī*, *Bhuvaneśwarī* and *Ambikā*, Para Siva, Vishwanatha and Pasupati, to be the Purusha even while becoming the Prakriti, to be Akshara and Kshara, to be serenely detached and apparently inextricably involved, to be Divine and become the human in order that the human might become the Divine. He is indeed 'an eternal Child playing an eternal game in an eternal garden'. The whole creation is the spontaneous outflow of the essential Ananda, a sport. This Child

like all children takes a special joy in creating objects which reflect some luminous body and enjoys seeing the images so reflected and the whole process of reflection. Has He not created the suns and the seas, vast luminous bodies and equally extensive reflecting surfaces just for the sport of seeing the images ? And so we find in every individual formation we call ourselves a mirroring of what the Divine has conceived in his vast and fantastic imagination in the very ecstasy of intoxication with the rapture of His own power of endless creation, immense caprice. As above, so below. All creation and manifestation is the realisation in the microcosm and the macrocosm, a mirroring or reflection of all that is contained in the Transcendent. As in the microcosm, so in the macrocosm—the Atman and Akshara, the desire-soul and the Kshara, the psychic and the Virat Purusha, the Subliminal Purushas and the Taijasa, the Jiva and the Paraprakriti, the individual Prakriti and the universal Prakriti.

> One who has made in sport the suns and seas
> Mirrors in our being his immense caprice.

The Suns and Seas, Fire and Water, mutual opposites do not cancel or destroy each other but fulfil a mighty purpose and get mutual fulfilment. The form of the sonnet with its paradoxical style, juxtaposition and alternation of contraries stressing all the time on their unity in the Divine consciousness (Thousandfold and One; Thinker and Seer and Poet; critic-Witness and world-adventurer; King and Slave; Host and Guest; High Spectator and pawn of passion; suns and seas) and with the swinging rhythm in a background of deep calmness becomes a fit mansion for the ecstatic vision of the Lila. It embodies in its music the ripple and laughter, the surge and swell of the Ocean of Ananda with its core of Peace.

Again the suns and seas are not merely the physical suns and seas but as in the first quatrain—all-regarding sun—refer to the seven suns of the Supermind and their corresponding planes

(seas) of consciousness in the individual and the cosmos naturally aspiring for reflection first, to be followed by the descent later of these. As Sri Aurobindo explains in *The Hour of God*, these suns are the Supramental Suns of Truth, Light and Will-Power, Word, Love, Force, Life-Radiances (Power-Rays), Substance-Energy and Form-Energy descending respectively into the planes of the Sahasradala, Ajna chakra, Throat-centre, Heart-Lotus, Navel-centre, Penultimate centre and Muladhara. So then here is the secret aim of the Lila—the Descent of the Supramental Suns in the Seas of the individual and cosmic planes of consciousness, a Divine Life in a Divine Body, the triumph and the Joy referred to as the high stakes for which the Divine adventurer has ventured into the world, the goal for which the Psychic Being has become the Nature's guest with the Atman supporting from above and the desire-soul as a transitional formation towards the growth into the subliminal Purushas. For this sport or game or gamble or caprice is that of the Supramental Thinker, Seer and Poet and it cannot be unpurposive. 'A divine life in the manifestation is the inevitable outcome and consummation of Nature's evolutionary endeavour.' This is the supramental vision of life and the world—to see them as the fields for the progressive manifestation of higher and higher levels of the Divine Consciousness till the very physical consciousness radiates the Ananda of Lilamaya Krishna.

M. V. SEETHARAMAN

KAYA SIDDHI (II)
or
PERFECTION OF THE BODY

A divine life in a divine body

SRI AUROBINDO

THE aim of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is not an absorption into the depths of the Self within leaving the rest of the being run the mechanical round of nature till the wheel of Karma comes to a stop. Neither is its aim only to develop and orientate the emotional and other native powers of the heart to seek and find the eternal Beloved and lose oneself in His embrace. Nor is it solely to yoke one's will and energies to the Divine Will and go on doing the works allotted to him by Fate in a spirit of disinterested action for whatever benefit might accrue to the generality of mankind or to his own growth as a servant of God. Nor does the Yoga aim at an exclusive development of the faculties of the mind by means of purification, discrimination and subtilisation so that the mind may gradually grow into and become one with the Knowledge of One Brahman as the Sole Reality. Neither is it the main process here to tap the concealed or half-concealed potentialities in the system by concentrating on certain nerve-centres, in order to release the founts of psycho-spiritual energy so as to flood the entire being with the streams of power and Ananda which overwhelm the sense of limitation, bondage and pain besetting the ordinary mortality. No doubt some or all of these could enter into the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo as contributory elements in one way or other; but the central aim is, to put it as simply as possible, to awake to the realisation of the Divine within oneself, to open to the Divine Consciousness above and around so that it may pour itself, in all its grades of existence, into the human vessel and by a gradual absorptive action transmute it and its

entire nature into its own kind, i.e. transform the human into the Divine. The whole of the human being,—not the mind only, not the heart alone, not the will or life-force merely, but each of them, together with the physical body which has been fashioned by Mother-Nature after millions of years of labour with such care and exactitude. This taking up of the material body and its physical nature as an inevitable and indispensable step in the total perfection and divinisation of man is a special feature of the Teaching of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

In this Vision, the body is not simply a vesture or sheath of the soul in its career of spiritual evolution to be discarded once its use as a container of the organism of the life-mind-soul is over, either with the end of the possibilities of progress in the present term of existence or with the withdrawal of the soul from the line of evolution and its merger in Brahman or Nirvana. The body is as much a constituent as the mind and life are of the vehicular organism through which the soul works out its salvation or fulfilment. If through the growth of the faculties of the Mind, the soul unveils to itself the Knowledge which is at the base of all existence and which stands veiled to it, if through the operation of the energies of the life-force the soul goes through a variety of experiences in order to enrich itself and arrive at its goal, it is the materiality of the body which gives it a solid basis to stand upon and build its life. In a sense, for a soul in evolution the material body may be said to be the most important and fundamental fact of Nature in which it has descended. In fact, the human being with a material body alone possesses the soul. The entities of other planes or levels of being do not have a soul. The body not merely provides the base but actually it is a fortress as it were in the safety of which the individual soul can organise itself and develop its own individuality without being helplessly exposed at every moment to the invasion of the other individualities and forces of the Universal Life around. Equally important is the part it can and does play as a feeder of the soul, mind and life housed in it. This it does overtly by means of the energies it draws within

itself incessantly from its corresponding Material Nature without, and covertly from the reservoir of a Consciousness which is contained below its thick mask of Inconscience.

For Matter is in the ultimate analysis the other end or extremity of Spirit. Matter, says Sri Aurobindo, is Spirit or Divine Consciousness concretised in a manner that is palpable to the physical senses. It represents a hard, solid condensation of the Spirit for a purpose. And that purpose is to manifest and unveil itself in an order of existence where stability and solidity of the nature of Matter is the foundation of things, even as a constant state of fluidity and plasticity is the governing principle in the domain of Life and so on. And naturally the aim of the manifestation can not be complete until the involved Consciousness is awakened and set radiantly active in this physical substance of matter. In man, it means that the manifestation of the Divine Spirit is not complete unless and until it takes up the body also as its means of expression (and means of progression) along with the soul, the mind and the life-energy. As long as the body, i.e. the material substance is not informed and suffused with the light of God, neither Spirit nor Matter can be said to have arrived at their fulfilment. Sri Aurobindo's Yoga has this transmutation of physical nature into its supreme term of the Spirit as its final goal. Each level of the being of man needs to be treated to the Divine Light and Force and transformed; but none can be totally transformed unless the basal body of matter which lays a strong hold on every part formulated in it, is also transformed. Otherwise its inconscience, its characteristic inertia and resistance to change will continue to exert their own pull on the other higher parts. But if the body too is subjected to this uplifting and illumining change, the energies that flow from it to the rest of the being would be currents of increasing light and act as helpful feeders instead of being dragging impediments on the way. In a word, the integral perfection of the individual is conditioned by the perfection of the physical body.

II

Perfection of the body means the education and the full evocation of all the potentialities that are instinct in the body. Externally it implies the attainment of a symmetry of form and harmony of movements realising the Ideal of Beauty which is the Truth that is being manifested by the Divine in its expression on the physical plane. Internally, perfection of the body means nothing less than a full awakening and an uninhibited functioning of the Divine Consciousness in the body. In each cell of the body there is a consciousness that is dormant. By whatever means it is essential that this should be awakened and rendered active. It can be done partly by will, partly by regulated movements of the breath and of the body as in enlightened physical exercises where each limb is subjected to movements which train it to develop its inherent power and bring out the intelligence or the ray of consciousness behind that power. When such exercises are accompanied by a directing and aspiring will, it is possible to stir and enliven a responding consciousness within the cells constituting the body.

In our Yoga this movement of awakening and consciently energising the physical body to its very cells is supported by the massive action of the Yoga-Shakti, the Divine Conscious-Force of the Mother to which the sadhaka opens himself and surrenders progressively. The Shakti that operates in the Integral Yoga is a Force that at once liberates and transforms. Its action is two-fold : to liberate from the hold of Ignorance and Inconscience, and to transform the triple lower nature into its higher term, the Divine Nature, the *aparā* into the *parā*. This Shakti is active in the mind for the dissolution of ignorance veiling the true Knowledge attainable by the pure mind ; it acts on the life-force by lifting it up from its usual round of clouded action, limited by its very nature, into the freedom of a larger and luminous dynamism. In the physical body it is constantly at work, known and unknown to the sadhaka, preparing the material substance

of the body to receive and imbibe the higher vibrations of the Spirit, by steadily diminishing the grosser elements that darken, by infusing a steady charge of the higher Light and purer energy, above all by a constant pressure on the cells calling forth the consciousness imprisoned within to awaken and function actively. It acts as a kind of warmth heating up the organism to release what in enwombed in it. It also acts, at appropriate periods, as a deep Peace and restful Calm which invigorates the cells, gives them a fresh life and brings them into a vibrant activity. This incessant and pervasive action of the Divine Yoga-Shakti goes on relentlessly—uplifting what lends itself to be so changed, discarding what refuses to respond and replacing such by newer elements—and when seconded by the individual aspiration, will and vigilant passivity, its results are patent in innumerable ways to the practitioner. The material energies that are constantly produced and circulated in the system gradually change their nature ; they acquire the character of the governing Force. The forces of the material body become more and more plastic, more and more intelligent i.e. conscient, and act spontaneously and infallibly, somewhat like intuition in the mind. The extra-ordinary development that the human mind is capable of once it is freed from its sense-bound limitations, the spectacular feats of life-energy when released from the clamping hold of and the habitual dependence on the physical frame, are indeed nothing when compared with the wonders that a conscious and illumined body can perform as a matter of course. The Body truly becomes a Rhythm of the Spirit.

Naturally, the process is a long one, a hard one. It is incumbent on the sadhaka who aspires for this change, to take certain precautions, especially in the matter of food, sex and general health of mind and body. It goes without saying that continence is the first requisite. Sex-energy which holds the very life-producing substance in a concentrated form shall be conserved. So preserved it transforms itself into other forms of energy which strengthen the texture of the physical body,

increase the life-force both in duration and intensity, purify the faculties of the mind and raise their clarity to the white heat of illumination.

Food of course is to be taken in sufficient quantities till one is able to reduce or dispense with it without loss of the needed nourishment to the system. That is possible only when one learns to draw in the required sustenance from the universal Life-energy. Till then care is to be exercised in the selection of only such foods as nourish the body with their substance and energy but do not add to its gross character. Heavy, spiced food brings in tamas and should be reduced. Flesh of animals, or indeed flesh of any kind, is to be particularly left out. For besides its innate grossness, it brings in vibrations of another kind, as the flesh carries with it the psychological states of the consciousness of the animal of which it was a part. This entry of sub-human elements causes additional complications which are better avoided. The nature of the regimentation of food, however, depends also on the stage in which the practioner is. There must not be a confusion of the stages (and individual requirements) and undue haste and rigidity in the application of the ultimate laws. That is as far as food of the body is concerned.

In the Indian tradition, there is also the question of food of the mind. The Upanishad makes particular mention of this factor and emphasises on the purity of this food. One must be careful to breathe in only clean, healthy and wholesome thoughts. The attainment of peace, purity and enlightenment in the being depends upon this intake of the mind to an extent that is not generally realised.

Further, apart from the normal hygienic habits for the preservation of health one should take a special care to safeguard the body from attacks of illness and disease which beset the physical body from time to time. It is an important part of this Yoga to gradually acquire control over the forces of disease, decay, decrepitude and death, control which is steadily enlarged by the transforming Yoga-Force, in the fullness of time, into a conquest of

these agents of death, which means that death cannot be imposed on the body and one is able to discard the body when one chooses.

The physical body, says the Mother, is always protected by a subtle-physical extension of it which acts as a nervous envelope. Any intrusion from outside has to pass through this ring before it can touch the body proper. Whether it is a thought or an attack of illness it must first gain entrance in this stubtle body that contains the material body. This envelope must be kept healthy, resistant and strong. Here too, as in the case of the physical body, a benevolent temperament, healthy thoughts, clean vitality coursing through the body and a developed will-power go a long way to nourish and strengthen the nervous organism. Movements of bad-will, depressions of all kinds, wastage of vitality—in speech, act or feeling—and consumption of foreign substances like alcohol which act detrimentally on the human will, puncture the protective envelope with innumerable holes as it were, throwing open the body to the attacks of the Adversary. This subtle body must be fortified and one must learn to become conscious of it so that visitiations of weakening forces are felt and warded off at the outskirts itself. Thus far is the exertion demanded of the individual. The rest lies in the execution of the Yoga-Shakti which is the Dynamis of the Divine Knowledge and Will—the Supramental Mahashakti.

It is fundamentally the action of this Divine Shakti that goes to perfect the body supported by individual effort of purification, subtilisation, concentration of will and vigilant direction of all movements of and in the body. The aim is to make of the body a vibrant vehicle, a faultless automatic instrument of the Inhabitant within, with its material substance no more veiling and obstructing the spread of the supernal Light but actually transmuting itself into a mass of the divine charge of Consciousness for radiation in the universe, as long as He wills it and in the manner He wills it.

M. P. PANDIT

THE LIFE DIVINE

(*An Outline*)

Vol. II

Chapter XXV

The Triple Transformation

IF the aim of the spiritual awakening in man is to release him to a higher status of being elsewhere, then the way of each soul is to reach the right stage and enter on the spiritual path out of this lower existence. But we have seen that there is a greater aim,—that of a radical and integral transformation of Nature. For Nature seeks to effectuate a true manifestation of the embodied life of the Spirit. It becomes clear therefore that there is much to be done; for what has been done so far is to make a few individuals aware of their souls, but it is not the complete and radical change which establishes a new principle, a new order of being in the field of earthly Nature. It will be the supramental being who must be the leader of this.

Spirituality has yet to be established in its own right and sovereignty, instead of being a power for the mental being to escape from himself. Spirit has not attained the mastery free from the mind's limitations and from the mental instrumentation. Another instrumentation has begun but it has yet to become effective and cease to be supernormal to earth life attained through individual achievement. It must become the normal nature of a new type of being, one established in supermind on the basis of Knowledge. And this can only be when the spiritual-mental being has risen fully to supermind and brought down its powers

into terrestrial existence. This is done only by the triple transformation : the psychic change which makes effective the soul-instrumentation, the spiritual change of the whole being, even the lowest recesses of life and body, and the supramental transmutation, the ascent into supermind and the descent of the supramental Consciousness into our entire being.

In the beginning the psychic entity is veiled, although it is the true persistent part of our being. It is the ever pure flame of the divinity in things, and is deeply conscious of truth, good and beauty which are akin to its own character. Although the soul uses mind, life and body it is other and greater than these.

If the psychic being had not been veiled, the human evolution would not have been the difficult and disfigured development it is. Only intimations reach the surface from the psychic being, but our mind does not know the source, since they come clothed in mental substance. If the vital ego is dominant or if the mind is attached to its own judgment and will then the psychic cannot control the nature, and will remain quiescent. First the development of body, life and mind must grow, and the essence of all experiences assimilated for the soul's growth. In the early stages of the evolution there is no consciousness of soul ; the definite idea of soul comes in the realisation of something that survives the death of our bodies.

As the evolution proceeds we are led to look more deeply within ourselves. Below the surface the psychic principle begins to develop a soul personality, but it is still subliminal, though it sends its influences into the surface life. We vaguely become aware of a distinct soul in our surface action, giving us a sensitive feeling for all that is true, good and beautiful, and a pressure on the mind and life to formulate it in our thought and conduct. We recognise the soul as the turn of our being towards the perfection in our nature.

The psychic influence cannot be recognised because it comes to the surface mixed with the subtle mental, vital and physical action. Thus the psychic influence comes to the surface dimi-

nished, and is further deviated by the ignorant formation of the surface nature. Thus a wrong application is given to the action of our spiritual being. There is too an intervention of a mental ideation, often disastrously mistaken, and the fervour of the emotional being and the eager nervous responses of the body. All this mixture is frequently taken as the soul-stir, but the psychic entity itself is free from stain or mixture.

The soul personality has to evolve through a slow development. At first it has to remain indistinct, weak and undeveloped, for its dynamic self-building depends on its surface action. On the surface it is largely separated from its inner reality by the obscurity of our consciousness; and it has to act through outer instruments that are yet imperfect. In these conditions the true psychic light is distorted into a mere mental idea or opinion, and in the heart into a mere sentiment or blind vital enthusiasm. And since the soul has to influence the mind, heart and vital being it has to accept these first imperfect mixtures before it can turn them towards what is divine and luminous. As the psychic personality grows stronger it increases its communication to the surface, linking the latter with the psychic entity behind. It can thus transmit a greater purity and force to the mind, heart and life. But this action in itself is slow and difficult unless man awakes to the knowledge of the soul and makes it the master of his life and action.

The mind's help is impeded by the fact that many elements in us present themselves as soul elements. In certain old traditions what was mistaken for the soul was a subconscious formation which after death become the ghost of the personality. This vital formation was mistakenly called the spirit. It is owing to our ignorance of the subliminal parts of our nature that we frequently mistake the inner mind or vital self for the psychic. We have within us a mind-self, a life-self and a physical self which express on the surface our thoughts, feelings and instincts. These beings are powers of the Spirit expressed as a temporary mental, vital and physical personality which grows as the soul personality

develops within us. Each has its own nature and influence which mingle on the surface and make up the composite pattern of our life.

All this surface mixture is heterogeneous, and produces in us the constant confusion and conflict, which our reason and will find difficult to control and harmonise. Ordinarily we are driven by the stream of our nature and act from whatever comes uppermost. Even what seems a deliberate choice is most often an automatic action. In the animal being Nature acts by intuition and works through habit and instinct in the animal nature. But man cannot leave his action to instincts and impulses regulated by Nature. Through his self-consciousness he is compelled to attempt some control and harmony of the manifold components of his surface being. He thinks he is directing himself, but he only succeeds in setting up an ordered confusion. Man in fact is a multi-person, as well as a unique Person. But he cannot be master of himself until the Person imposes itself on his multi-personality and governs it. This can only be done if he goes within and finds the true control being of his soul.

The rule of different selves in us represents the stages of human development. When the being of the body is dominant we have the physical man, mainly occupied with his habitual needs and impulses. But this is crossed by other influences which tend towards a higher evolution. Thus the inner subtle-physical being can arrive at a more beautiful and perfect physical life, for himself or for the collectivity. If the vital self dominates we have the vital man, concerned with the satisfaction of ambition and passion, desire and the claims of his vital ego. But since the nature of the vital man is more active than that of the physical man he is more dynamic and creative. A reasoning intelligence that supports a strong vital personality is always powerful and effective, and can impose itself on life and action.

A third step in the evolution of personality is when the being of mind rules and creates the mental man. His life is chiefly centered on a mental idea or ideal to which the rest of his being

subordinates. He arrives at a harmony of his nature through the mental will allied to the reasoning intelligence; but this harmony is chiefly gained at the expense of suppressing the demands of the life and the body. But the life and body may impose themselves irresistibly on the mental ruler. And the power of mind is often impotent before the inconscient and subconscient instinct or impulse. Thus the mind is led to sanction ignorance and error and wrong thought, being powerless to change them. Thus the mind cannot integrate the whole nature; it can only lead one part, and deny fullness to the rest. It is in fact a transitional harmonisation and not a final one, which is only achieved by finding our real centre, our soul being. But this latter is mostly a silent witness in us rather than the master light, which is because the soul personality in us is not yet sufficiently developed. When it is strong enough it can come forward and control the nature; and then the real harmonisation of our being can take place.

A first condition of the soul's emergence to the surface is a direct contact with the spiritual Reality. The psychic element seeks this Reality through the good, the true and the beautiful. This is a preparatory stage before direct contact with the Reality itself is reached. It is only this contact that can touch deeply the foundations of our being and turn us towards transformation.

The psychic can turn the intellect, and intuitional intelligence towards contact with the higher Reality, by directing the thinking mind to become conscious of a spiritual essence or impersonal Reality. It feels this latter to be connected with a supreme Truth, Good, Beauty, Purity or Bliss. The increasing touch makes this Impersonality more and more visible; and the mental thinker becomes the spiritual sage. The mind becomes pure, tranquil and impersonal, and parts of life also are thus influenced. This mental change leads naturally to a purifying quietism, which however does not press for a dynamic change of the nature.

The tendency of the spiritualised mind is to go upwards into a vast formless and featureless impersonality, becoming aware of the unchanging Self and nameless Absolute. This results

in the experience of supreme oneness, infinity and eternity; the life falls quiet, the body ceases to need, and the soul merges into the spiritual silence. But this is not the integral transformation; the psychic transmutation is merely replaced by a spiritual change.

A second approach to our contact with the higher Reality is through the heart. This is more rapid because the seat of the occult soul is close to the heart-centre. Through love and adoration of the All-beautiful and the All-blissful the approach is made, and it can only get its full impetus when the mind goes beyond impersonality to awareness of a supreme Personal Being. Then all becomes intense and concrete, and an entire self-giving becomes imperative. If the devotee becomes directly aware of his soul and psychic personality, the love of God and men and all creatures develops him into the saint. But this is not yet the integral transformation.

This larger change can be partly attained by a consecration of the will in works. This latter subjects the ego to a higher law, or the ego serves a higher Truth or becomes an instrument of the Divine Being. The light of Truth which then guides the seeker may be a principle which he perceives on the highest height, or it may be a truth of the divine Will which he feels within him as the inner Voice or divine Presence governing all his actions. But it is in fact a combination of all the three approaches—the mind, the heart and the will—that creates a spiritual or psychic condition in the nature, which is open to the Reality now felt as enveloping and penetrating us. Thence begins a more powerful and composite change.

For this change to become total, the consciousness has to shift its centre from the surface to the inner being; and on this our life, thought and action have to be founded. To become thus the inner Person is difficult because of the opposition of our outer nature, and also because we have to pass through the inner subliminal nature in order to reach the depths of the psychic being. The outer nature must undergo a quieting and purification, and only then can we pass through the depths of our

being. There must also grow in us a Consciousness more open to the higher being, the cosmic Self and the Transcendence, a consciousness that surpasses the limitations of the surface mind.

Entering the inner being, especially before the outer nature is quieted, one finds oneself in a chaos of unfamiliar supernormal experiences, a mixture of subconscient, mental, vital and subtle-physical forces. Thus deceptive and misleading oppositions, and influences claiming to be the Divine Being or Powers of the Light may here confront one. The seeker will be misled from the true way if there is too much egoism or excessive ambition or a weakness of the life-force. These dangers were known to past spiritual experience and were met by discipline and methods of purification, and an entire submission to a path-leader or guide. But even so the dangers can only be surmounted by a complete sincerity and surrender to the Highest. They are signs that the will for transformation is there; the way will have been made open, though the process is never entirely easy.

One effective way of entering the inner self is by standing back from the activities of mind and becoming the detached witness of the outer movements. One can thus realise the true and pure mental being. Similarly one can be identified with the pure vital being or the pure physical being. And further, by standing back from all activities of nature it is possible to realise one's silent impersonal self. This brings a spiritual realisation but not transformation; for the Purusha may be satisfied to be free and leave the Nature, the Prakriti. The Purusha therefore has to become the master of all the thought and action, and this cannot be done through the instrumentation of mind, life and body. More deeply inward, beyond the being of mind, life, and body is the psychic entity; and this can be reached most directly by a self-offering and surrender of ourselves to the Divine Being.

As the walls of the outer nature break down, the inner light gets through, and the substance of the nature is refined and deeper psychic experiences become possible. The psychic entity

then appears as the central being upholding mind and life and body ; and it becomes the natural guide and ruler of the nature. Every inclination, thought, will and action is exposed to the psychic light and its obscurities are removed. All is purified and the nature harmonised. Rapid or slow the process goes on unfalteringly until the whole conscious being is made perfectly apt for spiritual experience of every kind, delivered from the limitations of the lower nature.

These experiences may be : the experience of the Self, of the Ishwara and Divine Shakti, of cosmic consciousness and the occult movements of universal Nature, an interchange with other beings, and an illumination of the mind and heart and dynamic action. These experiences appear when the soul's power of consciousness comes into play, the psychic consciousness which brings an immediate sense of the world and its being and a direct contact with the Self and the Divine.

Some of these experiences can come by an opening of the inner and subtler mind, heart and life without any full psychic emergence. But without this latter there is the danger of a magnified ego calling in powers of an inferior cosmic character. The guidance of the soul can alone bring the true integration and harmony ; and such a psychic-spiritual transformation would effect a vast change in our mental human nature.

But the psychic and spiritual openings are but steps in the complete transformation of the nature. The truth and power and delight are above mind, so that a psychic movement inward must be completed by an opening upward to a supreme spiritual status. This can be done by an ascent of consciousness into the ranges of overmind and supramental nature. The psychic change makes this possible ; for it opens us to the cosmic consciousness and to that which is now superconscient. This upward ascent opens us to the new spiritualised consciousness, which is seeking to express itself in the nature. To avoid the difficulties and dangers of a premature opening into these higher ranges of consciousness the full psychic emergence should precede this ascent.

The operations of the spiritual evolution are, however, various, and the action of the Consciousness-Force can alone decide the line to be followed at any critical phase.

When mind is opened to the light above, there is a rising up towards it, or a descent of its powers into our being. Our vision may be opened to the eternal Presence, the infinite Existence or the boundless Light; or there may be an occasional vision of it. If there is an ascension of mind to these heights the mind becomes lost and cannot retain the power of this experience. But when mind can by degrees become conscious, it can have a knowledge and experience of these superior planes of existence. At first the mental record is blurred and vague; but later the consciousness is able to retain some of these experiences. These ascents are possible in a concentration of waking consciousness, especially when the psychic has come forward. But a permanent ascension must be the ultimate aim, and a permanent descent of the higher into the lower nature.

The descent, in fact, is an essential part of the complete ascension. It may occur also before the complete break through mind has been made, by a descent of light enveloping or penetrating the lower being. A knowledge from above begins to descend and manifest in the mind's quietude. Revelations and luminous, intuitive visions enter which dispel all darkness or confusions, and a new consciousness begins to form. The heart and sense can see God, feel and hear and touch the Eternal and wake to a closer unity of self and world. Other changes of consciousness follow on this invasion by the Infinite.

This is the process of the spiritual transformation which culminates in an upward ascent, fixing the consciousness on a higher plane from which mind, life and body can be governed. It also achieves an increasing descent of the powers of the higher consciousness. A light and power and knowledge take possession of the mind and remould it, and afterwards the life part, and finally the physical consciousness. This new consciousness brings to us an abiding awareness of the infinite and eternal, the close presence

of the Divine Being, and the peace and joy of the infinite in all one touches and feels. The mental consciousness has then been wholly turned into the consciousness of the spiritual being. This is the second and the decisive transition in the triple transformation.

The process of Nature demands that every part of our being has to be taken up in its own nature and character and replaced or transmuted into the truth of the higher being. This can be done easily if the psychic change is complete. For ordinarily the consciousness remains on the mental level and receives descents from above, sometimes a single descent or a succession of descents; but unless one lives on the highest height there cannot be the integral change. If the psychic mutation has not taken place, the higher Forces may break the individual vessel; or on the other hand they may be seized by the egoistic mind or vital for their own self-aggrandisement. Sexual impurity, vanity and attachment to the Ignorance all impede the descent of the light; or an undivine force may try to seize it for its own purposes. The Power has to come at intervals and work behind the veil; the Light has to work in darkness. For the individual nature can only receive according to its capacity and the strength or weakness of its members.

The consciousness must descend into each part of the being in turn and work out the change according to the possibility in each. The creation of a new structure cannot be done from above but the full power of the higher principle has to descend into the lower levels, and hence there is a diminution and limitation in the results, the light gets blurred and the truth mixed. The power of overmind working in the obscurity of the physical consciousness is something quite different from the same light working in its own sphere; a partial effect is the consequence.

This is the reason for the slow and difficult emergence of the Consciousness-Force in Nature. The life consciousness in its descent into Matter cannot maintain its mighty impulses; and similarly the mind is unable to achieve its high ideas, and its knowledge is confused and clouded by the turbidities of life, and

by Matter. Neither life nor mind can perfect the material existence. Likewise the higher spiritual-mental powers undergo the same disability when they descend into life and matter; the limitation and diminution are always there, though there can be a considerable change.

Only supermind can descend without losing its full power of action; for its nature is a self-achieving Truth-Consciousness. Even in its limits it chooses its action. Overmind, on the other hand, is a dividing principle and its characteristic is to create harmonies and synthetise. But restricted by mind, life and matter its totality is hampered. It cannot manifest integral knowledge; and therefore it must call in the supramental force to fulfil it. The psychic change has to call in the supramental transformation. The radical change from a basis of Ignorance to a basis of Knowledge can only come by the intervention of the supramental Power.

This supramental intervention and its direct action in earth-existence is the third and final transformation, which establishes the soul consciousness on a completely effective self-knowledge. When the evolutionary Nature is ready, the Truth-Consciousness can descend and enable Nature to liberate the supramental principle within her. In this way the supramental and spiritual being are created as the first manifestation of Spirit in the material universe.

N. PEARSON

REVIEWS

Purusha Sukta *by S. V. Chennabasaveshwar.* Pub. Srimat Sharanagiri Shivayoga Brihanmath, Halvi (Mysore State).

The Purusha Sukta, Hymn to the Supreme Person, is one of the most important hymns in the Vedic literature enunciating certain key principles that underlie the Creation, the *First Laws*, as it calls them. It has also the unique distinction of appearing in all the four Vedas,[1] though with variations, and it is used for varied purposes, e.g. Japa, Homa, Puja, Prayaschitta (expiation), etc. In view of its importance this hymn has been the subject of study and interpetation by numerous scholars representing the diverse schools of philosophy and religion that abound in India. The present work is an exposition of the hymn in Kannada from the standpoint of *Shivādvaita*, the central Doctrine of the Virasaiva Religion. The author, Sri Chennabasaveshwar, is well read both in the ancient scriptures and the researches in modern Indology; he takes note of the main lines of thinking on the subject and seeks to sythesise their conclusions as far as possible in the spirit of Sri Aurobindo's approach to the Vedas as Books of eternal Knowledge. He draws upon confirmatory dicta from the vast literature of the Saiva Agamas and gives striking parallels to thought-expressions in the Veda. For important terms he gives satisfactory etymological derivations and where things are uncertain he provides all the available material for the reader to come to his own conclusions.

[1] The Purusha Sukta as found in the Rig Veda (X. 20) consists of 16 verses. It is ascribed to Rishi Narayana. In the Shukla Yajurveda—Vajasaneyi Samhita—(31.1) it has 22 verses and this is the text chosen for comment in this work. It occurs in the Taittiriya Aranyaka of the Krishna Yajurveda (III. 12) with 18 verses. It is found in the Sama Veda Aranyasamhita (IV. 3) and in the Atharva (19. 6).

Before proceeding to deal with the subject-matter of the study, it is necessary to know the broad principles of this Philosophy, the *Ṣat-sthala Siddhānta* and its variations from standpoints of major significance in the Darshanas. And this need has been amply met in the learned introduction to the book by Sri Nagesh Sastri who has analysed the different approaches to the Supreme Reality with a clarity, objectivity and precision that evoke admiration.

The Supreme Reality is ineffable, indefinable, without Form, without Quality, *nirguṇa*. When, as a result of Maya which is inherent in It, It assumes Name and Form It lends Itself to be described thus and thus. But that is not the eternal Truth. What is *nitya*, eternal, is the Reality, Brahman, without Form; the world of name and form is transitory, *anitya*, and therefore really unreal. This is the doctrine of the Kevala Advaita popularised by Shankara.

As against this there is the viewpoint which sees the Supreme Reality as Formful. When scriptures refer to It as *nirguṇa* or *nirākāra*, qualityless or formless, it does not mean that It has no qualities or form. It only underlines the fact that It is free from limitation by quality or form. The Form is as real as the One with Form. The soul, Jiva, and the World of name and form are as real as the Brahman their creator. The Lord is both the material and the efficient Cause. The universe is not *vivarta*, a seeming formation, but a *parināma*, a natural development of Brahman. Whether the Jiva and the World (Matter) are permanent and different though subordinate realities as in the Dvaita System or they are eternal yet dependent realities constituting the body of the Lord as in th Vishishtadvaita, what is affirmed is that the World and the Jivas evolving in it are real.

The philosophy of the *Ṣat-Sthala* of the Virasaivas is different. Here the Paratattva, Supreme Reality, is conceived as *both* with Form and without Form. This Ultimate is the *sthala* (*stha*-source and *la*-goal), the Divine who is at the head of Creation and is called Shiva. Inherent in Him there is a Conscious Force,

a *Vimarśa Śakti*, Self-aware Power. This Shakti has a state of self-involution and a state of self-expansion. In the former condition the Supreme is unmanifest; in the other He is manifest. That is to say, the Para Shiva remains form-less or becomes form-full according to the mood of His Shakti. That is His Lila. Shiva who is *sthala* becomes, in His Divine Play, two: *liṅga* and *aṅga*, *śiva* and *jīva*. The Shakti that is inalienable is *Kalā* as related to *liṅga*, and *Bhakti* as related to *aṅga*. (Bhakti here means a spirit of self-surrender and worship).

The Linga (i.e. Shiva as Linga), Shiva with Form is *iṣṭaliṅga*, attainable by the soul in waking state, in the gross form, the *tyāgāṅga*. The *iṣṭaliṅga* further modifies itself into two : the *ācāraliṅga*, practical, in which the *tyāgāṅga* develops faith, *bhakti*, and becomes *bhakta-sthala*; the *guruliṅga*, the preceptive, in which the *tyāgāṅga* has strong faith and becomes *maheśa-sthala*.

Shiva with and without Form, *sakala and niṣkala*, is *prāṇaliṅga*, attainable by the soul in dream state, in the subtle form, *bhogāṅga*. The *prāṇaliṅga* also modifies itself into two : the *śivaliṅga*, auspicious, in which the *bhogāṅga* focusses exclusive concentration and becomes thereby *prasādi-sthala*; the *caraliṅga*, the active, with which when the *bhogāṅga* gets identified in experience it becomes the *prāṇaliṅga-sthala*.

Shiva without Form, *niṣkala*, is *bhāvaliṅga* attainable by the soul in state of deep sleep, in the causal form, *yogāṅga*. The Bhavalinga too modifies itself into two : the *prasādaliṅga*, the gracious, by meditation on which the *yogāṅga* gets established in a joyous *śaraṇasthala*; the *mahāliṅga*, the Great, by identification with which the *yogāṅga* attains a state of identity, *aikya-sthala*.[1]

Thus the Divine Reality admits of both the states of form and no form. The evolution of the Universe proceeds by a manifestation of 36 Tattvas, principles[2] : Shiva, Shakti, Sadashiva,

[1] These are the six poises *ṣat-sthals*, of the Divine on the double line of manifestations as *liṅga* and as *aṅga*.

[2] which are grouped either under three categories of *Cit*, *Cit-Acit* and *Acit*, 5, 6 and 24 respectively or into 11 Linga Tattvas and 25 Anga Tattvas.

Ishwara, Sadvidya, Maya, Five Kanchukas (of *kāla*, *niyati*, *rāga*, *vidyā*, *kāla*). Purusha, Prakriti, Mahat, Ahankara, Five *tanmātras*, *manas*, Five organs of perception, Five of action and the Five elements. When His Shakti blossoms, Shiva manifests in these 36 all-pervading *tattvas*, He extends Himself into All This—yet all the while never ceasing to be what He has been always and ever will be in His Utter existence. In a word, this creation is a self-formulation of the Reality that is Divine. At every grade of the manifestation there is, in principle, an identity between the Creator and the created, the *Liṅga* and the *Aṅga* and it is the object of this discipline to realise their union at each status so as to achieve a complete harmony in oneness between the Shiva and the Jiva.

Thus what is manifested here is the Divine Reality; what manifests is the Shakti that is inherent in the Being of the Reality; what Form and Name is assumed in the manifestation is as real as the Reality that is shaped into that Form and Name. This is the first truth declared in the Purusha Sukta which opens :

> Thousand-headed is the Supreme Being, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed. Embracing the earth all around, He yet exceeded it by a span.

Thousand here is not a numerical figure. If it were so, the author points out, there would be two thousand eyes and two thousand feet for a thousand heads ! A thousand signifies infinitude, *ananta*. He extends Himself into Space and He transcends it.[1] Not only Space, but Time also.

[1] The author recalls another verse in the Rig Veda which says that He has neither Head nor Feet. There Head stands for beginning, *ādi*, and Feet for end, *anta*. The Supreme has neither; what we see is only the middle i.e., only a part of Him.

Thus in the Vedic conception the Supreme Godhead has Form and no Form. He is both *sākāra* and *nirākāra*.

The author further observes that the Head, Eye and Feet indicate the three forms of the Shakti (inherent in the Lord) which are put out for purposes of manifestation : Iccha Shakti, Power of Will, Jnana Shakti, Power of Knowledge, Kriya Shakti, Power of Action.

The Supreme Being is this all, that which was and which shall be. He is the Lord of Immortality and of what grows by food.

Such is His grandeur; and yet greater than that is the Supreme Being. A fourth of Him is all beings, the three-fourths is the Immortal in Heaven.

What are these *three* parts ? asks the author and answers : they are Sat, Chit, Ananda which are denoted by *Guru-Liṅga-Jaṅgama* or Ishtalinga-Pranalinga-Bhavalinga in the *Ṣatsthala*.

With His three-fourths Above rose the Supreme Person; one fourth of Him was again here.
Thence on all sides He spread out as that which eats and that which eats not.

From Him was born the Cosmic Egg and from that the Person.
Born, He reached beyond the earth behind as well as before.[1]

Thus is declared in unequivocal terms that All is a direct Manifestation of the Supreme Godhead.

Then the Hymn speaks of the Primal Sacrifice performed by the Gods with this Cosmic Person as the oblation. That is to say, the Supreme offered His own Body in sacrifice and the Creation is the result. The author expounds the meaning of the word *Yajña*, with apt quotes from varied authorities, grammarians included, and traces the development of the different significances it has acquired.[2] All the diverse manifestations of life and sub-life

[1] or, He extended Himself and created the earth and the bodies.

[2] The author closely follows the method of Sri Aurobindo in giving the mystic significances of the number *seven*, *cow*, *horse*, *goat* etc. We whole-heartedly agree with him in his rejection of the rendering of *chandānsi* (verse 10) by Griffith as 'spells and charms'.

are the products of this self-sacrifice, the supreme holocaust as described by Sri Aurobindo. All orders and tiers in creation proceed from the corresponding concentrations in the Cosmic Being carrying their particular potencies. Thus :

> His Face became the Brahman; His Arms became the King; His Thighs the Vaishya, and from His Feet was born the Shudra.
>
> The Moon was born of His Mind, the Sun of His Eye, Indra and Agni of His Mouth and Vayu was born from His Breath.
>
> From His Navel arose the firmament, from His Head the heaven, from the Feet the earth and from the Ear the quarters. So they fashioned the worlds.
> ...With sacrifice the gods worshipped the Sacrifice (embodied in the Cosmic Person). These were the First Ordinances; they reach up the Heaven where are the ancient Gods, the *sādhyas.*

And "This mighty Being" declares the Rishi, "*I know.* He is of the hue of the Sun, beyond the reach of Darkness. Creating all Forms, all Names, He the Wise glories. Him who was anciently lauded by Brahma the Creator and by Indra with full knowledge of the Four Quarters, he who knows Him thus becomes immortal *here*; there is no other path for release."

Before closing we might give here a free rendering of the six verses in this Hymn which are not found in the version in the Rig Veda :

> Coming out of the Waters and too of the sap of Earth, He was above the Creator. Twashtr, the celestial architect, comes

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His reading of the derivation *chandayati, alhādayati, chandaḥ,* in the context of *ramaniyārtha-pratipādaka śabdaḥ kāvyam* of the later retoricians is particularly happy.

designing His Form; of that Supreme Person the Universe was first born. I know this Great Being of the hue of the Sun, beyond the reach of Darkness. He who knows Him thus become immortal here; there is no way else for release. The Lord of the peoples moves within the Womb. Unborn He becomes manifoldly. The Wise know His Source, the Creators aspire for this station of the Rays. He who blazes for the Gods, He who is in the vanguard of the Gods, Who was born ere the Gods, to that Splendour Creative, salutation !

Thus declared first the Gods creating the Light of the Supreme : Of the Brahmana who knows thus, the Gods shall come under control.

Beauty and Opulence are Thy wives; Day and Night Thy sides; the Constellations Thy form. The Ashwins are Thy wide mouth. Grant this our desire Here; grant that Yonder; grant us All.

Written in chaste, cadenced prose this work is a solid contribution to Vedic literature.

A Dictionary of Thought. *By D. D. Runes.* Pub. Philosophical Library, New York 16. Pp. 152, Price $5.00.

Dr. Runes is a well-known philosopher on the American scene today and justly famous for the *Dictionary of Philosophy* which he has edited with distinction. The present book, *A Dictionary of Thought*,—we are told—represents the mature wisdom of the author distilled from as many as twenty works of his written during the last twenty years. Arranged in alphabetical order these *bons mots*, definitions, pointed observations, etc. cover a very wide variety of topics.

The author's anchorage in the Hebrew Tradition and Thought is evident, and yet there is a pleasing catholicity about his outlook. The whole book is pervaded by a kind of ethical idealism, interspersed here and there with flashes of wit and sarcasm smiting the

hypocrisy and prudery of some of the contemporary modes of civilisation. We shall pick up a few specimens at random :

Flattery is the first step on the road to slander.

History has three sides to it : the wrong side, the right side, and the way it really happened.

Ideas : Words, profound and meaningless, pop out when thought fails.

Knowledge : It takes a lot of knowledge to understand how little we know.

Miracles are no proof of saintliness. The Devil performs them too.

Naturalist touches the hem of God and he thinks he feels the pulse of the Lord.

Paradise is nowhere, but peace can be had anywhere.

Not all *Religions* are good, but there is good in all religions.

Silence is the gate to understanding.

There are naturally some sayings in these pages which would not be readily accepted by all, since they but represent only one side of the truth. For instance :

"*Faith* will not waver where reason is its foundation." We had thought that Reason has little to do with Faith. In fact what rests upon reasoning is no faith at all. Faith is rather something that exists, a conviction that is there, independent or even opposed to reason.

Nor can we agree that 'the saint is often more selfish than the sinner'. Dr. Runes delivers this judgement 'in the light of social morality'. Without going into the deeper question of what really constitutes social good, we would only point out that the very attainment by an individual of the higher Consciousness that is characteristic of a saint, is an event that impinges upon the environment with an uplifting and purifying effect. The vibrations released by a saint, the example set by his living constantly in a

God—or near-God consciousness, do exert a silent pressure on his fellow-men to follow suit.

Then there is an entry to which we strongly demur. And that is : "*Poetry* : language of the wounded soul." Language of the soul, perhaps, but the soul in its moments of expression, equally of joy, beauty, heroism, not anguish alone.

M. P. PANDIT